

History Is Made!

Major Health Insurance Reform for the American People

Health care in America will be transformed to the benefit of patients and taxpayers

Washington, DC - Congresswoman Betty McCollum (DFL-St. Paul) and House Democrats tonight passed a historic health reform bill that will transform the health care system in the U.S. This House passed reform legislation previously passed by the U.S. Senate which will now be signed into law by President Obama. Also passed by a vote of 220-211 was a reconciliation bill which contains correction and legislative improvements, including language negotiated by Rep. McCollum to fix Medicare geographic payment inequities suffered by Minnesota hospitals and doctors.

"Tonight Democrats had courage to stand up for the real needs of America's families. The real winners tonight are patients and taxpayers because their health care will become more affordable and accessible," said McCollum following the vote.

In a speech on the floor of the U.S. House only minutes before passage, McCollum said, "When we pass this bill lives will be saved, families will be protected, and millions of Americans will no longer live in fear. Today I will vote to end discrimination against people with pre-existing conditions. Today I will vote to extend health care to 32 million Americans. And when this bill becomes law health care security will finally become a reality for the American people."

The legislation passed by the U.S. House will extend insurance coverage to 32 million uninsured Americans and cuts the federal budget deficit by \$143 billion in the first decade according to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office. It will also end insurance company abuses such as rescission, discrimination due to pre-existing conditions, and lifetime insurance caps. For seniors, the bill fills the Medicare prescription drug donut hole.

The health care benefits that the 615,000 Minnesota residents of the Fourth Congressional District can look forward to the following:

- 409,000 residents of the Fourth Congressional district will see improvements in their current health care coverage
- 7,000 residents of the Fourth Congressional district who can't buy health insurance now because of a pre-existing condition will be able to obtain coverage
- Up to 141,000 families in the Fourth Congressional district will get tax credits to help make

health insurance more affordable

- Up to 14,100 small businesses in the Fourth Congressional will get tax credits to help make health insurance more affordable for their employees
- 86,000 Medicare beneficiaries in the Fourth Congressional will see better care and will pay less for prescription drugs because the Medicare Part D donut hole will be closed
- 50,000 young adults in the Fourth Congressional will be able to stay on their parents' health insurance policy until their 26th birthday
- 19,500 uninsured residents in the Fourth Congressional will have access to health care coverage
- 900 families won't have to file for bankruptcy due to unaffordable health care costs
- 20 community health centers will receive millions of dollars in new funding to see thousands of new patients.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.

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